

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



3 3433 06825285 1

Stockdale

ZFRM

The Future Life

Fact and Fancies

1

BY
F. B. STOCKDALE

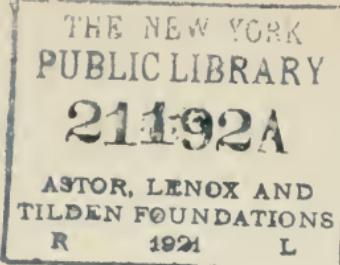
“Because I live ye shall live also.”

JESUS



THE ABINGDON PRESS
NEW YORK CINCINNATI

P.P.
[1921]



Copyright, 1921, by
F. B. STOCKDALE

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE BASIS OF CHRISTIAN THINKING	5
II. SCIENTIFIC CONFIRMATIONS	27
III. THE DOOR TO THE KINGDOM	36
IV. NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE	52
V. THE HABIT OF LIFE	65
VI. THE LEAPS OF LIFE	80
VII. MEDIUMS	91
VIII. THE SILENT ANSWER	104

CHAPTER I

THE BASIS OF CHRISTIAN THINKING

I

CHRISTIANITY is founded on the assumption that you can depend on law. It does not assume a law to hold up its teaching; but it does presume to trust the law that it has discovered in realms where it has not seen the law's complete fulfillment, or application. It takes for granted that having found the law, you can apply it in all places. It believes law is reliable. The size of the thing that reveals the law has nothing to do with circumscribing the application of the law it reveals. A feather falls for the same reason as a mountain.

All Christ's teaching assumes that this is true. As long as the laws of the universe remain what they are so long will the teaching of Christ endure. You cannot overthrow

THE FUTURE LIFE

the teaching of Jesus until you have changed the divine order of the universe.

Take, for illustration, his doctrine of providence. He refers to birds that eat and flowers that grow. The birds "Sow not, neither reap; which have no store chamber nor barn." The flowers grow; "they toil not, neither do they spin." The birds persist; the flowers continue season after season. These simple facts of the air and the field are common facts. Birds are in every land and flowers grow in all climes. In the realms to which Jesus refers the facts are universal facts: all birds are "fed," all flowers are "clothed." By an act of faith Jesus transposes the meaning of these facts and reasons, "If God clothes the grass," and "If God feeds the birds," will he not feed and clothe you? By an act of the mind he transposes the relationship and by a daring of the spirit he trusts, in the realm where he does not see, the law he has discovered in the birds that are fed and the flowers that are clothed. Will God care for birds and not for humans? Does he dress the lily in

BASIS OF CHRISTIAN THINKING

beauty, beside which the grandeur of a king is common, and then be indifferent to you? Christ not only gives these facts the widest application, but chides his disciples for not doing it for themselves: "O ye of little faith." If you have "faith," you will not be afraid to trust in your own life the law you see operating in the lives of birds and flowers. In the thinking of Jesus God cannot be careful of birds and flowers and careless about human bodies and souls. If you ask Christ how he knows that God cares for men, he will answer you, "I tell you he cares for the birds and clothes the flowers in beauty surpassing anything a king may know." That is enough for him. It ought to be for you.

The thing to be noted is that the law that is revealed in the life of the bird and the growth of the flower can be moved to any life and to all kinds of life *and be trusted*. If the angels have any question about God's care, the flowers and the birds should be sufficient for them. They would be. Christ looks at a simple fact and then achieves the transposition of the *care* that fact reveals.

THE FUTURE LIFE

He does not stop to talk about the *method* God uses in feeding the birds: however far the birds may have to fly for food, it is God that "feeds them." Whatever conditions may be necessary for the growth of the flower, it is God that does the "clothing" of its life.

We have here the habit of the Master's thinking. When he finds a universal law in the realm below where he dwells, he lifts that law and applies it to the the world in which he moves. He tells us that the law you can see is trustworthy in the realm where you cannot watch its operation. This is "faith." God feeds birds and clothes flowers, and you are perfectly safe in trusting him to do the same for you. You may rest assured that the angels have to do the same thing. It is very probable that you will have to do it forever.

II

Take two references to prayer. "What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? or if he

BASIS OF CHRISTIAN THINKING

ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?" Common observation, as well as personal experience, shows that all parents feed their offspring. The busy robin, in the summer time, is thus engaged. Cat or cow, mouse and man will do the same thing. This universal habit, the outgrowth of relationship, finds striking application, to the Divine Being in the Master's mind. "If ye"—evil, as you are; a mixture of selfishness and kindness as you find yourself; imperfect, as all that is human must be imperfect, when compared with God—"If ye . . . know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"

The thing here to be noted is that Jesus takes a simple fact of life and applies it to the unseen God. We are not now talking about prayer, which is something to be practiced rather than preached. We are calling attention to the foundation on which Christ rests the rights of prayer. The universal relationship carries with it the universal obligation. Christ here takes what any man

THE FUTURE LIFE

can see, a simple fact in the parental world, and, without any apology, transfers that fact from the earthly to the heavenly Father. He moves the rule from the world seen to the world unseen, from the human to the divine relationship. He insists that if the earthly parent knows how to be good, the heavenly Parent must know much better. If you know when to give the thing for which the child asks, God will not be less sensible. This is straight Christian thinking. It steps from the seen to the unseen with perfect confidence because the seen reveals a law. The thing you have found is that parents supply the needs of their children. When the child is hungry we do not buy him a suit of clothes; when he is needing a coat we do not buy him a dinner. We supply his need. The transition from "you" to God is a long distance, but law knows nothing of great or small, long or short. Therefore Jesus insists that what is true in the parental world among humans is true in all parental relationship, whether "you" be the parent or God be the "Father."

BASIS OF CHRISTIAN THINKING

Take the story of the unjust judge. “There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: and there was a widow in that city; and she came oft unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.” This is a simple story. It shows that when poor, friendless people persistently seek justice they get it. It does not teach that God can be teased into doing anything that you would like to have him do. The widow was seeking justice. The judge loved his ease more than he cared for justice. Her persistent seeking was the cause of her getting the justice she sought. “Hear what the unjust judge saith; . . . shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him? . . . I tell you that he will avenge them speedily.” The simple fact that justice, sought at the hands of an unjust judge, was obtained by persistence has its larger

THE FUTURE LIFE

application. It is the seeker for justice that decides whether it shall be obtained or not. When God's people cry "day and night" for justice they get it. In the story the trouble was with the judge; in life the trouble is with the suppliant. The unjust judge speaks for God and says, "When day and night you call for justice, when you seek it as the widow sought it, you will get it." That is what the unjust judge says about God.

We want here to notice the basis of the Master's thinking as well as the leap of his thought. He never leaped without a firm basis. He was always sure of his fact before he ventured into the unseen. The distance of his going was always perfectly safe because the base from which he started was absolutely reliable. Before an unjust judge justice persistently sought is obtained. This is one of the basic facts of history and life. From the hands of despots justice is plucked by the hand of persistence. There comes a time when it is less trouble to grant it than to withhold it. "If"—and what a flight the Master's mind now takes!—justice is ob-

BASIS OF CHRISTIAN THINKING

tained from the unjust by the persistence of the seeker, how much more will that be true when the judge to whom you come is himself the embodiment of justice? "I tell you," says the Master, in substance, "God will speedily give justice when you persist in seeking it."

Let it be distinctly understood that we are not talking about prayer. We are calling attention to the Master's practice, to his habit of basing all he teaches on some *fact* he finds. He does not advance some unrelated notion of his own mind and ask you to build on that. He finds a law on which to base the operation of his own mind, and then, by the most daring method of thinking that any mind had ever followed, he applies that law to the unseen world, the spiritual realm with which he deals; that is to say, he gives birth to Christian thinking.

III

Study his doctrine of the divine forgiveness. You will find it grounded in the constitution of things. How did Jesus discover

THE FUTURE LIFE

that God will forgive? Better, perhaps, to ask, On what grounds did he ask us to believe that God will forgive?

Now, turn to and read the fifteenth chapter of Luke's Gospel. We will not ask you to make a study of the chapter, as we are seeking only to find the Master's *method* of thinking. In this chapter you will find these simple facts recorded:

When you lose anything you look for it. It may be sheep, it may be money, or it may be a son. What it is does not matter. If a savage should lose a feather from his head-gear, he would look for it. If a child loses a chip with which he was playing, he looks for it. If a father loses a son, whom he cannot seek as if he were a sheep or money, still he looks for him. "When he was a great way off his father saw him."

Anything you have cared to own, having lost, you are glad to find. If you have cared to possess it, you are *pleased* to recover it. You cannot make it otherwise. It may be a shepherd with his sheep, a woman with her money, a father with his son. For this rea-

BASIS OF CHRISTIAN THINKING

son some people break their heart if they lose their money. They sorrow more than the thing is worth. One cannot lose a son and be indifferent when he is gone; one cannot deny his fatherhood if the boy returns.

These are very simple facts; be it noted they are *facts*. States of civilization do not change them. Be it property or pet, money or man, the same emotions move. Jesus insists that these universal facts have universal relation. God is not outside their operation. They cannot be true in the human relation and false in the divine. Sunshine and rain are not better preachers of the divine nature than are the deeps of the human heart. What a shepherd knows, a woman feels, a father does, are all parables, and set forth richly what they tell. Their telling is as certain as their being. What they say does not depend on where it is said or what it is said about. The transposing of these simple facts constitutes the gospel of the Son of God. These simple things are in human life, are part of it. You cannot have human life and be without them. Where life is they

THE FUTURE LIFE

are. Unless these simple things have a wider meaning for human life than the human life that reveals them, then they have no meaning outside themselves. When things have no wider meaning, then there is no possibility of a gospel.

Jesus assumes that the law he finds here is true yonder. What is true in a "fold," a dusty room, a broken home, is true in heaven. "Likewise I say to you." What you have seen in shepherd, busy woman, and broken-hearted father, if you had eyes with which to see, you would see in God. "Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." Christ rests the divine forgiveness on the divine relationship. He does not theorize about it; he writes no philosophy to maintain it; he simply tells you it *is*. If you analyze his method of thinking, you will find he maintains it *is* yonder *because* it *is* here. The transposing of these simple facts of human life brings us to the most daring conclusion: that human experience can know God will "seek," "find," and

BASIS OF CHRISTIAN THINKING

“forgive.” The thing is done with such august simplicity that we have lost the daring of it.

IV

Turn now to the greatest demand that Christ made on men—“Love your enemies.” His argument is that God is good to folk because God is good in himself. Goodness is not a product, primarily, of conditions; goodness is a producer of conditions. God is not good because the sun shines; the sun shines because God is good. If you would be children of your Father who is in heaven, you must do good because you *are* good; not because people are good to you. You must “love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.”

This is not a study of Christian ethics.

THE FUTURE LIFE

We are now concerning ourselves with the *foundation* on which he rests them. Ethics, as Christ teaches them, have a firm basis in the very nature of things. The two foundation stones on which he rests his demand are the simple facts that the sun shines and the rain falls without discrimination. There can be no debate about the accuracy of his observation. Wherever the sun shines it shines on all; the rain falls on everybody within the circle of its falling. Neither the sun nor the rain does any selecting for its action. They fall on all alike. That is the simple fact in the world about you. How does the Master's mind deal with that simple fact? "He makes the sun to shine." Yes, but he does more than that: he makes it shine on "the evil and on the good." This simple action of sun and rain is taken as a declaration of the moral nature of God. The way the sun acts and the rain performs is ground for the command, "Love your enemies." Anybody can swap good for good, evil for evil, love for love, or hate for hate. The monkey in the forest, the lion in the jungle could do

BASIS OF CHRISTIAN THINKING

that. But if you would rise to the heights of moral life and in the world of action be a representative of your Father, then you must act like the sun and the rain.

This imperative call for goodness in the world of human actions is simply a demand that you copy the sun and the rain. You are absolutely shut out of any representative position unless you follow this natural universal habit of sun and rain. You may be Methodists, or Presbyterians, or Baptists without climbing to this dizzy height; but you cannot be godly with anything short of it *because* this simple fact in the land of sunshine and rain is a declaration of godliness.

The action of the Master's mind is one of the sublimest flights of sanctified imagination. The action of sun and rain has a meaning; that meaning he transfers to the world of human actions. Sun and rain become the standard in human activities. The law in the natural world is made the standard in human life. When the law of sunshine and rain is contradicted in the world of human activities those activities do not represent

THE FUTURE LIFE

God. Christ, in his unflinching demand, is not insisting on any personal notion, but on a law of God's world, as revealed by sunshine and rain; that is to say, he founds his demand on law.

V

The parables of Christ contain this same kind of reasoning. The leaven which a woman put in the flour leavens all the flour. The "kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven." Things that impart their own life to all they touch are "like" each other. In the material world yeast has this leavening power. The "kingdom of heaven is like it." It is not the size of the baking that determines the leavening power. Were the world a batch of flour, one cake of yeast, given time, would leaven it all. The size of a truth and the amount of inertia it has to move have nothing to do with its operation any more than the amount of flour has to do with the *action* of yeast. We discover a truth to-day and want the world to know it in the morning; and, because they don't we

BASIS OF CHRISTIAN THINKING

think they never will. Do not fear, if it be true, all will come to know it. Why should we forget that it has taken centuries to put the roundness of the earth into the common thinking of man? The number of times the earth swings round the sun has nothing to do with the action of truth. Flight of years does not give the gospel its potency; it gives it its chance; its power is in itself. It is like leaven. If length of statement were the gospel's power, Jesus would be out of court. You can read in one afternoon every word of his that has come down to us. The energy of yeast is not decided by its wrapping. Here, again, the thing to notice is the transference of a truth from the material to the immaterial world. Leaven leavens the lump. That is a simple fact revealed in the making of bread. Nobody doubts this truth where we can watch its operation. It is not doubted until the Master moves it; then we doubt the very thing we can see. We act as though law were law where we could watch it work, but as soon as it is beyond our ken we are afraid to trust it. Jesus says law is trust-

THE FUTURE LIFE

worthy everywhere. Leaven leavens the lump in making bread; then, says Jesus, it is true in making men.

“If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.” If it be defective it handicaps all your activities. Here you have the relation of one of the senses of the body to its activities. If you have perfect vision, you move with safety. If your sight is all right, your whole body sees; your whole body is full of light because your eye sees right. Jesus moves this complicated arrangement from the sight and action of the body to the sight and action of the mind. “If the inner light is dark, what a horrible darkness!” As Jesus reasons you can be cross-minded as surely as you can be cross-eyed. He moves both cause and effect, without changing the law, from the physical to the mental and moral realms. We know he was correct. You can be nearsighted of the mind as well as of the eye. You can be color blind mentally as well as physically. Just as surely as some men see red as though it were yellow some men see wrong as if it

BASIS OF CHRISTIAN THINKING

were right. Many men live with their "nose to the grindstone," just as nearsighted people read with their noses on the book, because they are mentally nearsighted. The fact of the matter is that all kinds of sight possible to the eye are possible to the mind. Everybody knows you can have fallacies of mental vision; imperfect mental vision and limitation of mental vision handicaps every mind save the mind of God.

Crooked men do not think straight. Mental aptitude is not the only ground of trustworthy conclusions. Loyalty of affection has as much, probably more, to do with the discovery of truth as does the readiness with which the gray matter of your brain vibrates. Your modern psychologist has nothing on Jesus. He is but applying what the Master knew. Jesus saw that you must have a perfect instrument before you can perfectly depend upon it. That one fact makes Christ's place forever secure in the life of the world. We must shape our action to his seeing because his "eye was single." He saw things as they were. He

THE FUTURE LIFE

made no mistake when he depended on the law that is revealed in the dependence of the body on the kind of sight native to the eye.

Take one more illustration of this habit of the Master's trusting the law he finds in the world about him. "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" What a tree puts forth decides what kind of tree it is. If you pull an apple from a tree, it is an apple tree you pulled it from; if you pluck a bunch of grapes from a vine, it is a grape vine you plucked it from. "A good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." This law of kind, both as to thing and condition, we do not try to prove to men. We put men in ward for observation who deny its validity. The facts are simple; the use Jesus makes of them is trustworthy. It must be as true of men as it is of trees: You know them by their fruits. This is true of vines and trees, Jesus declares. The law is just as true in the lives of men. Men are known by their actions: good comes from good; bad comes from bad. "The good stored

BASIS OF CHRISTIAN THINKING

in the heart of the good man brings forth goodness; the evil man from his evil store brings forth evil." The law cannot operate one way among trees and another among men. The law of like and like is alike in all worlds.

We have not catalogued all that Christ taught. We have given sufficient illustrations to show his method of thinking, and that what he taught was based on law. He is a revealer, not a creator of truth. All he teaches is grounded on the laws of the universe. We are not asked to believe it because he says it; we are asked to trust it because it *is* so. Christ is absolutely scientific in his method. The world with which he deals does not lend itself to proof in the realms of weight and measure, but the laws he trusts do lend themselves to the world of both observation and demonstration. The world will always have to exercise *faith* in the transposing of those laws, but while the world remains what it is and God's laws can be depended on, the teachings of Jesus will never be overthrown.

THE FUTURE LIFE

The life and death of Jesus has captured the thinking world. We ought not to forget that his thinking was behind all he taught and all he did. We have paid too little attention to Christ the thinker. We see, so far as we follow him, that he built on law; that he was not dealing with mere notions, mental attitudes that would change with the growing knowledge of the world. His method he trusted, and the thinking world has to do the same thing. He found a law, and then believed it was trustworthy everywhere.

CHAPTER II

SCIENTIFIC CONFIRMATIONS

OUR scientific world is perfectly Christian in its method of thinking. We have so completely circumscribed the Christ in confining him to the spiritual world that we have forgotten his service to the mind of man. The mind that leaped from the growing flower to the care of immortal man blazed the way for the thinking of the modern world. It is by no means accidental that the sciences were born in a Christian civilization. There are no accidents in the mental world, as there are none in the physical. Given a Christian atmosphere, mental Christian products sprout as well as moral results.

When Mrs. Conduitt, niece of Sir Isaac Newton, first told to Voltaire the story of the falling apple she may have been romancing about the apple, but there is no romancing about the law of gravity. And should

THE FUTURE LIFE

we ever change our conclusion the *method* of arriving will be perfectly valid; whatever is true here will be true in all places of which we think. Whether it was falling apple, peach, pear, or plum that gave Sir Isaac the *idea* makes absolutely no difference. All falling things tend to the center of the sphere to which they belong. The same law that keeps you on the earth keeps the skin on an apple. That law is not a thing of our world alone; wherever trees grow the fruit falls toward the roots. It is a law of the universe, not a system, in the boundless reaches of space, that would hold together for one moment if it were divorced from this law. This is God's way of holding things together, and he has no other way of doing it. When we thus speak, and so believe, we are following Christ's method of thinking. Having found a law, we give it universal application. The same force or tendency that causes an apple to fall toward the roots, instead of above and beyond the branches, is the same law that holds together the clustering systems that we have named

SCIENTIFIC CONFIRMATIONS

the Milky Way. No thoughtful person will laugh at you when you declare that this law operates on worlds we have not seen. Every world brought within the range of the great Hooker lens is held in place by the same law that causes the feather, coming from the wing of the flying bird, to fall toward the earth. On worlds that are far beyond the reach of our greatest telescope the law holds good. We think sanely when we are thinking beyond our sight. That fact is the life's blood of our modern thinking; it is Christian. For that reason you feel perfectly sure that this same law will last. It not only *is* but always will be. So long as matter inhabits space this law will hold it all and be operative in every place.

Because there is such a thing as moral gravity righteousness exalts and brightens a nation. Right has its own tendency, and that is Godward. Sin tends in the opposite direction.

A falling apple is a small thing, but it told a *universal* law. When, in his moment of inspiration, Sir Isaac Newton gave universal

THE FUTURE LIFE

application to what the falling apple said, he was but doing what Jesus habitually had done. Scientific knowledge is based on the dependability of law. It is not true to say we "assume"; you can *depend* on law. You might "assume" the surface of the sea would hold you up and try to walk on it; your assumption would not prevent your sinking. You do not perform the same mental operation when you walk on the solid ground. You *know* that will support you. If it did not, you would go down. The mind has the same right to a native footing as do the feet. The mind has the same right to move with safety as does the body. The right to be and the right to be safe are one and the same thing. An innate moral sense asserts its right to mental movement in perfect safety. The dependability of law supplies that safety, and to trust it is supremely Christian.

If you are assuming when you give the widest application to your newly discovered law of gravity, then Jesus was assuming, and all life, moral as well as mental, is based

SCIENTIFIC CONFIRMATIONS

on an assumption. We hold that life rests on certainty. We put our O. K. on Sir Isaac's conclusion. He was dealing with the physical world, and our O. K. only carries with it a mental attitude. Jesus, thinking in the same certain way, fails to carry our consent because he was dealing with a world with which we are not so familiar; and, besides that, we can only consent here with the affection as well as the mind. Let us remember that the certainty with which Christ moved does not depend on our consent. He was right, he is right, whether we move with him or not. When the modern mind moves among the stars it has about it the sense of assurance because it knows the law that holds the stars in their place. Christian thinking moves with the same certitude. It moves, not among twinkling stars and whirling worlds, but among those ethical, moral, and spiritual forces that belong to the nature of the unseen and eternal world. Our beliefs, those that are Christian, rest upon the laws of the universe.

Take another illustration of the depend-

THE FUTURE LIFE

ability of this method. Sir Oliver Lodge has pursued the quest for the atom until he has found a world so small that you would have to group twenty-five thousand of *them* before you could see *it* with the unaided eye. In this infinitesimal world he does not find the singular. The ion is a positive with its negative revolving around it. Here he has attraction and motion. He informs us that the negative is circling the positive with such incredible speed that it makes more circuits per second than there have been seconds in the history of man. So and good. Now, every student knows that here he will find motion and quantity related in terms of distance. The distance between his negative and positive, judged by its bulk, will hold the same relation as the planets. This we know because the operation of the law of gravity is not a matter of the size of the world that reveals it. If you could add a pound's weight to Neptune's bulk, you would move him farther from the sun. The law of moving bodies is the same whether you are measuring the distance of a planet from its

SCIENTIFIC CONFIRMATIONS

center, or the flight of your negative around its positive in the land of your ion.

A short time ago I sat with others in a room and listened to a concert that was given miles away. Nine hundred miles from where a man sang people heard his voice. There were no wires from him to them. In one case those who heard were far out at sea. By an electrical arrangement vigor was added to his vocalizing, and the vibrations so caused were carried with fidelity. With faithfulness these vibrations excited the "receiver," so that we heard the voice of the artist who was miles away. This was because the waves of the atmosphere move according to law.

Not only may it become possible to "communicate" with Mars, but there is no reason, in law, that would forbid our conversing with them.

When one hears a human voice with the speaker many miles distant, and understands what he says, then remembers that this is the physical world, it does not seem such a far cry to that inner message of which the

THE FUTURE LIFE

Master spoke when he said, "My sheep know my voice." The world is not moving from but toward the Christ and the world he revealed.

We have knowledge of force, the laws of friction, the conservation of energy, motion of liquids, oceans tides, surface waves, liquefaction of gases, surface tension, laws of vibration, making combinations of tones possible and so giving us music. In all of these we simply depend on the trustworthiness of law. It is only when we disregard or are ignorant of the law that we go amiss. In whatever world we find ourselves our safety lies in our dependence upon law. We cannot disregard it and be safe; we shall never go astray while we hold to the law. If you are dealing with spectrum analyses, the speed of light, the flight of sound, you feel sure of your ground as long as you know the law of that with which you are dealing. This is but saying that our natural sciences are so many confirmations of that habit of mind that we have called "the law of Christian thinking." Jesus did more to guide the hu-

SCIENTIFIC CONFIRMATIONS

man mind, as well as to free it from superstition, than any other leader whose thoughts we make our own. The great scientists have all followed his method, though the subject-matter of their thinking has greatly differed from his. Christ is the first great scientist, and his conclusions are as dependable as anything else that you build on the laws of the universe of God.

CHAPTER III

THE DOOR TO THE KINGDOM

WE have the authority of Jesus for the idea that when one enters the spiritual kingdom it will be as a little child. The statement that such is the only way in which it can be entered is a declaration that you cannot enter it any other way. It does not mean, as it does not say, that the Kingdom is a childish affair. It simply declares that it will be entered, if entered at all, as every other world is entered. You cannot come into this world in any other way than as a baby. That is one of the universals of life. The same is true of the spiritual world. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and age of body does not give authority in "spirit" life. Whether one comes into the Kingdom when he is a child or when he is a man, he must

THE DOOR TO THE KINGDOM

come *as a child*. This is only saying that you cannot begin a thing without beginning it; and all things that you begin you have to begin at the beginning.

It is a strange thing that when we come to the spiritual realm every man thinks himself an authority. Now and again men who have spent the force of their minds in the pursuit of some study other than the spiritual life come over and seek to bring with them the *authority* which they have—and are entitled to—in the world where they are masters. The way they talk about the subject is itself abundant proof that the Master was correct when he said that men come into the Kingdom as little children. To thoughtful folk the attempt of a novelist to write a new system of theology is one of the most amusing things of the times. The audacity of it is so naïve that it could not be simulated. Yet if some man should come with a new system of astronomy and for it should claim attention because it was “all his own,” we would laugh him out of court. The fact that a man is a master in one realm

THE FUTURE LIFE

does not at all imply that he may speak with authority in another. He may or may not.

Some years ago in a newspaper interview one of the great men of our day denied the doctrine of immortality. He did not believe in it. A number of the members of the church of which I was pastor called my attention to the interview. They were greatly troubled that a man of such prominence should make the statement credited to him. Some months later this same man was the guest of a brother clergyman. The minister thought it a good time and an opportune one to talk to him about spiritual things. Accordingly they, or rather the minister, talked about faith, repentance, justification, and communion with God. Those words have come to stand for certain experiences which are known to the spirits of men. As words they carry no *material* content whatever, but they stand for a tremendous amount of regenerating power. The facts of experience covered by these terms are supposed to be familiar to every minister of the gospel of Christ. While this great man

THE DOOR TO THE KINGDOM

had been engaged in his laboratory the minister had been a no less diligent student, *but* on other subjects. The great man had lived in the *material* world, the minister in that realm of experience known to the soul. The noted scientist finally said to the minister: "But, Doctor, I do not know what you are talking about. The words you use possess no meaning for me." Later, when the guest was about to leave, the clergyman said, "If you have no objection, I should like your autograph in these books." The man accepted the first volume offered, only to find it was a "Life" of himself. Taking his pen, he wrote his name on the fly leaf of the book. Then, possibly to remind the minister of the subject on which they had talked, after his name he wrote "Annals of a Barbarian."

In a widely read magazine for October, 1920, through another interview this same scientist speaks on the subject of communication with the spirit world. A careful reading of that part of the interview appearing in quotation marks will lead any student of human life to the conclusion that this famous

THE FUTURE LIFE

man has paid a great price for his wonderful success. The farthest he gets away from the material world is to a recognition of the "subconscious mind." Then we are to pin our faith on some apparatus that he hopes to perfect and place at the service of the departed, and if they do not use it—ergo, there are no departed! This is the first time that we have seen the statement made that "If the mountain does not come to Mohammed," there is no mountain.

It is an easy thing to confound faculty with personality. This mistake all materialists seem to make. If the departed do not remember, and if they do not want to communicate with us, then probably they are not. It would seem a simple thing for men to remember that we know that personality perseveres from place to place, of which memory takes no knowledge. The foetus is not linked to the spermatozoon by memory. The newborn babe does not remember the womb; I have never met anyone who remembered cutting his first tooth, and boyhood is so removed from the memory of man that

THE DOOR TO THE KINGDOM

literature is barren so far as the life of boyhood is concerned. We have no life of a boy worthy the name, although Mark Twain attempted to produce one. The inspired writers have given us but one incident in the boyhood of Jesus.

To substitute the materialism of the interview referred to for our faith in the spirituality of life borders on the blasphemous. Because some scientists have kept parts of a chicken living after its head was cut off we are no longer to believe that anything happens outside a physical realm. Twice-born men, the millions the ages have known, are all wrong in their conclusions, and we shall have to give up the belief that God does anything for man. Job is now a back number: "I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom. But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding. Great men are not always wise [wise about all things]: neither do the aged understand judgment." "Moral character" is now accounted for by "units of life." (Let it be

THE FUTURE LIFE

noted that these are physical units.) We have been mistaken in thinking that God's Spirit comes in regenerating power to repentant men. The only thing that has happened is that a few "myriads of units" have moved from one part of the man's body to another—migrated, as it were, from his toes to his brain.

All this is very interesting reading, but it is the rankest kind of materialism. To follow it, and it alone, is to deny the reality of anything outside of the world of matter. We simply claim that when you have got to the end of your chase after these "life units," which in themselves are so small that a thousand of them aggregated together would not become visible under even the ultra-microscope, you are still in the material world, and you have not yet entered into the "kingdom of heaven." You will never reach the spiritual kingdom save by the simple fact of being born thereinto. "You must be born again" is neither a Jewish nor a first-century truth; it is one of the absolute "musts" of life.

THE DOOR TO THE KINGDOM

Recently some small commotion has been made by a well-known writer who has discovered something that is to "revolutionize Christianity." The gentleman is the author of some very good detective stories. We have greatly enjoyed reading them. This master of the science of deduction has now turned to the pursuit of the "departed." He has been accustomed to have the object of his pursuit step out of a carriage or dart into a railroad coach. He has looked for the names of those he was seeking on a register. Now, when he starts after the "departed" he starts with the same paraphernalia. He goes after finding out the whereabouts of a departed soul just as he would seek for a fleeing assassin. It seems never to have dawned on this creator of fiction that there is a wide gulf between spirit and flesh. One cannot help but smile when he makes a ouija board the arbiter of our faith in immortality.

We are not objecting to this producer of entertaining romance having his notions. He may have all of them he wishes, and any kind he wishes; but we do object to his effort

THE FUTURE LIFE

to substitute his “automatic writings” and his ouija boards for the Christian faith. We claim a far better foundation for our faith in immortality than all the writings he has ever seen or all the didos that a ouija board can be guilty of.

We might call this celebrity’s attention to the fact that Jesus knew nothing of mediums of any kind coming between himself and the angels that ministered to him. It might be well for him to note that there was a directness between the shepherds and the multitude of the heavenly host that leaves no room for his mediums or ouijas. A mind of his intellectual caliber ought to know that spiritual verities are not subject to the same rules as matter.

There is such a thing as grown-upness in the things of the Spirit and spiritual life. There is more juvenile talk about spiritual things by men who make a pastime of its study than about almost any other subject one might name. To make a ouija board the medium between two souls for the determination of as serious a question as the continued

THE DOOR TO THE KINGDOM

life after death is an act too silly and absurd to attribute even to a child. Only a man who has forgotten how to become a child could be guilty of such nonsense.

But recently much notice has been given to another of the world's great scientists. This investigator comes bringing his tools with him. A master in the field of matter, he also comes to speak on the subject of immortality. It is very much like a plumber coming to build a house with his ladle and blowpipe. If we wanted to know something about the ion and could get this personality to talk to us about it, we should be perfectly delighted. When, however, he comes, gum-shod and armed with his paraphernalia for the pursuit of ions, and tells us he is studying immortality, one would be inclined to laugh were it not for the fact that the common mind attaches all the weight of his name in the realm where he is a master to his conclusions in a world where he is a child. I have not met nor talked with this gentleman, but I know a childish voice even when I am not acquainted with the child. The best in

THE FUTURE LIFE

“Raymond” is childish; much of it is puerile. In our judgment to print such a book is a waste of paper, especially in these times of the conservation of that article. We are ready to acknowledge our debt to this great man when in his pursuit for finality in the material world he informs us, as previously stated, that he has discovered the ion, and has found it so small that we should need to group twenty-five thousand of them in order to produce a bulk sufficiently large to be seen with the naked eye. When he tells us of the swiftness with which the negative circles the positive we are ready to accept his declaration, for he is moving in the field of matter where he is a master. But when he comes with his scientific kit designed to locate a departed soul, we wish to remind him that he cannot spend a life time under the spell of the material and not pay the price therefor. This may be a form of that vicarious law by which all men who serve men must pay for that service.

This is not a plea for ministerial authority; it is the simple recognition of the fact that a

THE DOOR TO THE KINGDOM

man cannot go from one world to another and be a master without a change of tools. One does not catch a spirit with automatic writings, and dancing tables are moved by the magnetism of the folks whose hands can be seen. Now, if "Raymond" would lift the small stand and put it where directed, we might become serious about it. As long as two pairs of hands are necessary—hands that can be seen—to enable "Raymond" to tip the table, and thus spell out his message, we must be excused for insisting that the departed spirit has nothing at all to do with the operation. If "Raymond" and his mother cannot tip the table without the sister's help, we shall maintain that the mother and the sister do the tipping.

The contention that spirit hands bring about such results is too foolish to merit a passing notice from the serious minds of the world. To submit for final answer the question of the continuity of personality to the tipping of a wooden table, the sliding of a ouija board, or automatic writings seems to us to be the last word in childishness. No

THE FUTURE LIFE

mind that is not infantile in spiritual things would ever think of doing such a thing. These men, great indeed in their chosen fields of labor, need to be told that we resent what at best seems to us but idle talk. Should we move into their realm and, in our ignorance, attempt to instruct them concerning the things they have made a life study of, we should expect—and deserve—to be politely bowed out, and probably invited to stay out.

It might be well to call the attention of these writers to the fact that Jesus would not submit to the testing of a spiritual relationship by any misuse of a natural law. One can never wish to test what one has not doubted. Doubt can never move a spiritual verity from the realm naturally its own into a realm where it is not native. It is because it cannot be done that it is written, "Thou shalt not put the Lord thy God to a test." The whole brood of the methods of modern spiritualism are children of doubt. They seek to move a spiritual verity into the land of doubt. You never move the cer-

THE DOOR TO THE KINGDOM

tain into the realm of the uncertain, and thus prove the certain is certain. If you become certain, you must move into a realm of the certain. When you teach a child the relation of numbers you do not move the laws of mathematics into the land of the child's ignorance; you bring the mind of the child into the realm of mathematical certitude.

Our spiritualistic friends would have us hang our faith on the maudlings of a medium, and feel more certain that our friends survive because a semiconscious somebody has said something she did not know she was saying. They would murder faith by folly. Our more materialistic friend would electrocute faith by an apparatus of his own contriving. They seem to think Paul was speaking only for his day when he said, "And now abideth faith, hope, charity [love], these three." And these three immaterial things will always abide. While God is infinite and the created creature finite, the creature will have to live by faith if he lives at all. We are not speaking of the "myriads of life units" of which one's body is built. We

THE FUTURE LIFE

are speaking of "myself." One cannot even keep his body alive if he waits for proof before he eats. All rational acts are acts of faith. This "testing" of spiritual entity by an appeal to a material something is unchristian and for that reason is unscientific. Christ won out by *not* testing, and it is not likely that we shall make a Christian success by going in the opposite direction.

The thing about which man has a right to speak with certainty is his experience. Anybody that has felt pain is competent to testify. That does not give authority to explain pain. In much alarm the writer once said to a physician, "Doctor, you are choking me." "Yes," he answered, "I can see your throat widen." A physician's explanation of pain is worth more than a dozen other people's notions about it. To have an experience is one thing; to talk intelligently about it is quite another. Why don't these great men take up the practice of medicine? Because the State has recognized that proper preparation counts for safety. If there be any subject in human life where the sternest

THE DOOR TO THE KINGDOM

preparation should be insisted upon before one is allowed to speak it is on the subject of the soul. It is not possible for one to immerse himself in a materialistic world and then talk sensibly about the soul. "Shinney on your own side" is good advice for master minds just as it is good advice for the boys on the ice pond or the playground. In fact, it is good advice anywhere.

CHAPTER IV

NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE

THE singular has not yet been found. Negative and positive are terms we apply to movement; one thing goes around another; the part that moves we call “negative”; the part that holds we denominate “positive.” There are in the world life and death. Life is the positive.

Let us add one more to the many definitions of death. Death is the result of the last contest between soul and body, as life is the constant warfare of the flesh with the spirit. This definition does not go around the thing defined; it does embrace all we know about it. The “contest” we know in terms of experience, and we learn the “cessation” by observation.

When speaking of death, if you mean that life ceases to be, then we utterly deny there is, or can be, any fact to correspond with

NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE

the idea. A universe vivified by the eternal presence of the Eternal God leaves no room for death. To think that life can become death is to grant that death may "nibble" away the Eternal. Such a notion makes death the final cause.

The real question about death is not whether life ceases but whether personality perseveres. To Christian thinking, death is one of the steps that personality takes, an experience through which the spirit passes.

To say that the soul is tied to the body is too loose a term for careful thinking. It is far nearer the truth to say that the body is the garment worn by the soul, and that the spirit of a man changes its clothes quite often. Talk with a detective who has carefully studied the matter of finger prints. He will tell you that if you wash your hands in some solution that will thoroughly cleanse them, then just shut your hand and open it again, then touch a pane of glass with one of your fingers, he will tell you with which finger you pressed to the glass; and he will also inform you that by the impres-

THE FUTURE LIFE

sion you leave on the glass you can be picked out from all the rest of mankind because this is a field where there are no duplicates. Literally, rivers of oil flow down the creases of your skin, as streams flow down the valleys of a continent. That is simply saying that you are constantly discarding what you do not care longer to keep; *but you* do the discarding. The negative moves around its positive very slowly compared with the rapidity with which we change the forms we wear. The notion that life is slow is only the notion of folk whose opinions are not worth noting. In rapidity of movement the flight of light does not transcend the flight of life.

Between the time one is conceived and the day of his birth he wears all the forms the centuries have achieved. We pass through the land of reptile, fish, bird, and beast, finally reaching a human form. In nine brief months is covered all the distance that the law of evolution has brought our ancestors through in all the millions of years that are behind the human race. We wear each dress

NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE

so short a time that it does not even touch *us* by the wearing. We are born *human*. The spirit is neither the spirit of a reptile, fish, bird, nor beast. *We are human* in form. *We* had never been anything else. The developing child has worn and worn out all the vestures that have been his. We have not yet lost the habit; we wear more forms of life each hour than one can see stars at night. Life changes its forms so swiftly that even the mind itself does not detect it in the act even in the great crises of experience. No man knows just when he doffed the form of an infant and donned the form of a "big boy." He knows he came to the experience that we call boyhood and also that he wore its form. We know, in terms of experience—and that is the final way of knowing—that personality persists through all the changes of a kaleidoscopic world that we have called living. *We change the form we wear again and again while the negative is circling its positive once!*

Now, in this world of living, this journey of the soul, where changes of form mean dif-

THE FUTURE LIFE

ferent experiences to *us*, life is not the negative. The notion that life is in a castle besieged by death and that finally life will have to capitulate is not true. Take the notion of life and death as set forth in the "Golden Legend." We are at school; the school of Rabbi Ben Israel. It is time for Judas to recite, and the Rabbi says:

"Well, boy! now say, if thou art wise,
When the Angel of Death, who is full of eyes,
Comes where a sick man dying lies
What doeth he to the wight?"

Judas answers:

"He stands beside him, dark and tall,
Holding a sword, from which doth fall
Into his mouth a drop of gall,
And so he turneth white."

Here life is passive. Death, "dark and tall" and well armed, is master. The man turns "white" because Death fed him a drop of "gall." It is very easy; so easy that it is not true. It is too dark to be true. Like all easy explanations it is wide of the mark. Our knowledge of Death does not girdle

NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE

what happens to him who does the dying; we but indicate what our limited faculties take cognizance of in that experience of another that we have named dying.

The facts of the universe drive that “Angel of Death,” with all his eyes bunged up, to the land of ignorance from which he came. He had his birth in the times of the world’s childhood and is now but a bugaboo to the thoughtless. There is no place in this world of ours where life is ever besieged by death. Death never conquers life. “Life is ever lord of death.” Death is the form that life has no more use for, and so discards it, as the butterfly leaves the chrysalis, or a shedder crab scurries off and leaves its outgrown shell behind. If the Almighty had kept all the forms that human souls have worn, he would have a junkshop that would litter up his universe.

In this life-and-death business life is master. Death is not holding life out at arms’ length. Life is not circling death so fast that some day life will grow dizzy and be thrown off heaven only knows where. The ways of

THE FUTURE LIFE

life baffle us, but we know that personality persists through countless changes of form. The life that was in the egg is now in the bird. The life that was in me at birth is in me still. It is life that creates death, and millions of forms a day are thrown off by the most sickly living soul. Now, be scientific and doubt the number. Let it suffice that none have counted the discarded forms of one brief day. The simple fact is that in this question of life and death life is the positive, and it is a mistake to put it in the place of the passive. Life is never passive.

The idea that death is master of anything is heathenish and untrue. Look about you. It is not the bulb that squeezes out the life of the lily. It is the life of the lily that rends the bulb and leaves it in the ground to rot. It is the life of the lily that builds new form, for the fuller expression of itself, and pushes that new and changing form through the crusted earth into the land of sunlight. It is the life of the lily that throws off its used-up form, in what we call "fragrance," until miles of the moving atmosphere of the world

NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE

have been laden with what the lily either was through with or used to attract insect or bird for the lily's better propagation. It is the life of the lily that decides the fate of every form it wears.

It is not the chrysalis that serves notice on the butterfly to "Get out." Pick up a chrysalis some day and take the time to watch the birth of a butterfly. You will see the slightest movement, then a little dark speck, which later you will find is a head, show through. You will see him use his mouth to eat his way out. The first use of his mouth is not to fill his stomach with food; he literally eats his way into a new world. Bit by bit you can watch him leave his prison house; the part that is out helps the part that is in to get out. His front feet help his hind feet through. Then his folded wings begin to show, and soon he spreads them for a new expression of his growing life. If you find the empty chrysalis, you will say, "This is death," but, had you watched the process, you would say, "This is the triumph of life: a butterfly is born." All we care to notice is

THE FUTURE LIFE

that what is left behind was passive: the life that has gone on built this passive form and left it, threw it off, when it was through with the form it had used in its onward going. Where we can watch the changes of form we see that life is the master thereof. The new form takes the place of the old; neither form is the butterfly. The life, seen through these changing forms, *is* the butterfly.

Have you ever watched a chick break its shell? If so, you have concluded that it was the chick that did the breaking. It is not the chick that is expelled; the shell is the passive and is broken. You never heard of a shell seeking a writ of eviction. The life that is the chick changes the form from embryo to wings. The life simply uses yolk and white to build a form for the life that is. Life does both building and discarding. Mr. Edison's idea of "life units" is probably correct; but they are the *material* out of which bodies are formed. They are directed. If they went at random, you would have men all arms, legs, noses, or anything else. "Every seed its own body," each living thing

NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE

moves in its own circumscribed orbit, but the life is one thing and the “body” another.

Now, sensible thinking trusts this fact whether we can watch its operation or not. Where we can see it we come to know that it is the life that counts; where we can't see it we have to believe it is so, because law is law. Jesus trusted the laws of his Father's world and his gospel still grows. Its foundations are far more secure than the finest concrete made by man could render them. The centuries pile on the building the weight of their achievement, and it still stands. It will continue to stand because it is a living building, and the life is the deciding factor. It is not the legs of the kangaroo that do the jumping; the kangaroo does that; he simply uses his legs.

We have just again seen that we may rely on the unseen laws of the moral world. Not even Hohenzollerns can induce God to change the laws of the human mind.

Now, if you are in doubt with regard to the application of the law of change to your own body, ask some reputable physician to

THE FUTURE LIFE

tell you how many forms a day you wear. He will tell you that he does not know. Your own sense will tell you that you have had many differentiated forms or you would still be the babe your mother brought forth. When you came from that land, where you had worn all the forms that nature knows, you kept right on with the habit of changing, because you *lived*. In three months you doubled your size, and you have doubled it again and again. Do you tell me you have been living? I say you have been dying. The infant form was discarded that the youth might be; the youth gives place to the man. This is not the work of death. Death is the name we give this law of change when its action goes beyond our ken; but it is the very proof of life. Life is always building new forms. This is the only way we know there is such a thing as life, outside the realm of consciousness. There is no place in nature where life is doing anything else. Is this law reversed because we cannot follow it as far as the departed have gone? Not likely. It is the act of a rational mind to trust the

NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE

law when vision fails. Is it too wild a thing to imagine that, as we have watched the birth of insect or bird, or have awaited with keen anxiety the coming of new little life in human form, there are folk in the other world who, with great interest, watch the soul break out of this shell of a body? We know the soul goes as surely as we know the bird hatches.

"Hurt," did you say? "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." We are not now discussing the problem of pain; we are calling attention to the universal fact that life is the active agent. Death is a name we give to the forms that life has discarded. To interfere with the processes of change *is* sickness. "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." As we "groan" we grow. We keep throwing off one burden for another until the time comes when we shall discard the entire burden of the flesh, and the "mortal must put on immortality." I am not, and never have been, the slave of death. Death has never touched me. I have worn more

THE FUTURE LIFE

forms than the morning knows; more images of the first man than there have been moments in all the reaches of the years. I did not need any one of these forms only long enough to put it beneath my feet that I might reach to other forms for larger living.

Whether I am in love with the *process* or no, I keep right on, and one of these days I shall drop the natural and find myself clothed in a spiritual body. In that body and yon world I shall not escape the law of change; all form must change if it lives. We shall be "changed from glory to glory." "How?" Ask some one else. I am not troubling with the "how"; I am calling attention to the *fact*. We are asking you to look at a universal fact, in all forms of life. Life *is* the master. The seed and the soul are subjects of law, the same law. For this reason we sing:

"Break off your fears, ye saints, and tell
How high your great Deliverer reigns.
Sing how he spoils the host of hell
And leads the monster death in chains."

"Life is ever lord of death."

CHAPTER V

THE HABIT OF LIFE

PERSONALITY wears innumerable forms though it has but *one* habit. The forms are changed with kaleidoscopic rapidity, but the *habit* never changes. This simple fact is sufficient ground for faith in immortality. If it were the only reason nature gives, it would be sufficient for all the faith we shall ever need to use. All life spends *now* getting ready for *then*. Every form of life lives for the future it has not seen, reaches for the form it has not attained. The whole universe is face forward.

Matter never occupies the same place twice. There are no grooves down which the planets roll. No world is ever in the same place in space a second time. Movement not only means going; but it means going to where the mover never was before. This habit is eternal. When to-morrow becomes

THE FUTURE LIFE

to-day and to-day has become yesterday, the same law grips the same things forever.

All forms of life show this universal habit. Look into the vegetable world. The bulb that you keep through the winter waited for the planting in the spring. How long the life in it would wait we do not know. We are told that a handful of wheat waited for six thousand years in the hand of a mummy, for the discoverer to scatter it in the soil, and now one of the finest of wheats is feeding millions of people. How long life would wait for its chance we do not know. Mr. Burbank tells us that if the chance for larger life, better form, richer fragrance, deeper color, comes through the mating brought by busy bee or restless humming bird, the seed of that flower will cling to and pass on that possible improvement to a thousand generations, waiting to make actual the potential advance.

In the world of flowers the stem is built to support the unformed leaf, the form for the fertilization that shall come. In the world of vegetables and flowers life sets its

THE HABIT OF LIFE

face toward the future and spends to-day preparing for to-morrow. Every morrow is but a repetition of the same law. Life never reaches that which satisfies itself. By itself, of itself, life ever faces forward and moves in the direction it faces. The everlasting process never overtakes the everlasting law. The process is always pursuing the principle.

Because of this habit our berry bushes have climbed from the land of weeds. Our fruit trees have traveled the same long path from the same far place. Now, aided by the judgment of man, they put a thousand years of haphazard mating into one brief season; but they keep the same old habit. You could not have an evolutionary process without an evolutionary law. That law is the eternal habit of spending the present in preparation for the future.

When you turn to the insect world you find conformity to the same rule. Let one illustration suffice: The cicada are rather a numerous family. The most wonderful of them is the Rip Van Winkle of the insect world. Commonly we call him "the seven-

THE FUTURE LIFE

teen-year locust." From a small egg, laid under the bark of a twig, it comes to a creeping thing. Then it eats its way around the twig and with it falls to the ground. Here it burrows for seventeen long years, spends the lifetime of a dog, or cat, living in the dark. What it does down there we have no way of knowing other than studying it when it comes to visit us. We now have its homes located and know when to expect it. From a deep hole in the ground this locust comes to us with one of the most wonderful eyes in the world. In the dark he had no need of eyes, probably he lived by the sense of touch, as does the mole. When he comes to the light, for a few brief weeks, he will have need of eyes to see his foes and find his friends, and so he builds himself eyes with a thousand facets—one at either side of what might be called a tube. Between these eyes he has another set with three lenses in them. With his larger eyes he probably sees all around himself at once; with the smaller set he probably deals with the nearer world. This is not a history of this wonderful insect; it is

THE HABIT OF LIFE

merely an illustration of that habit of living things to look for the place that has not been reached and prepare for the time that has not arrived.

In the land of butterflies the same is true. I once spent an afternoon investigating the knowledge of a caterpillar. I found him climbing a tree. Picking up a dead sapling ten or twelve feet in length, I put it in front of him and got him on a stick. When the afternoon was gone I was convinced that it knew up from down. When I held the stick horizontally it would hold on with its four hind legs and reach far out into space on either side, reaching up and around in search for something to climb. When I tilted the stick he started on the upward way. I could not induce him to climb down. Before the afternoon was over I was sure he knew any grade, for he would start forward on any tilt from one or two degrees to perpendicular. I think he felt pleasure, for when I had kept him for some time on the level and then should turn the stick upward, he would start with more speed than he was accus-

THE FUTURE LIFE

tomed to use in traveling. When, toward dusk, I rested the end of my long pole against the outer end of a lower limb of the tree, he hastened upward and dexterously pulled around himself the outer edges of a leaf, taking the first leaf he came to, as though it knew it must hasten. It soon was ensconced in a cocoon.

The leaf would fade and with it the worker would fall, to be blown under some hedgerow and buried by the autumn leaves. In its winter home it would become so plastic that it would be nearly fluid. It would make no mistake in the location of thorax, head, wings, eyes or antennæ. It was not dead; it was not even inactive. It was building wings for the flight it had never taken, and besides was doing a dozen other wonderful things in that wonderful cocoon. The only thing I care to notice is that it was living by the universal habit of nature. It was getting ready for the world to be; preparing for the life to come.

Vegetation, insect, bird, and beast all illustrate this fundamental habit of nature.

THE HABIT OF LIFE

All the evolutionary processes of nature are gripped by the law of evolution, which keeps the face of all moving things toward the future.

Let us now turn to this law as revealed by human life. We shall find that the same law grips us that we have seen operative in the lower forms.

Ask a physician to tell you about the spermatozoa. He will inform you that for the journey to be taken by the human being, when first we know him, he is prepared with most scientific precision. Had he feet, he could never walk; had he wings, he could not fly; so he is a big head with a long tail. He swims his way across the sea of sex, and we say he is begotten.

In his new home, the womb, with the set purpose of the law of life, which is the law of God, he begins to grow. His growth is not *for* the womb he is in. He grows in the womb, but he grows for the world into which he will be born. So it comes to pass he forms a mouth that he *will* need; eyes that will be useful when he comes to

THE FUTURE LIFE

the light he has never seen; ears that will be necessary when the vibrating world he has never known is to be used and studied. Feet are formed on which he *will* walk; hands grow that he *will* use to grip things that are never found in the womb. All he becomes while in the womb of his mother he becomes not for where he is but for where he is *going* to be. All he uses in that wonderful place is his umbilical cord, which he will discard before he is an hour old.

Birth does not shake us loose from the eternal grip of life's everlasting habit. Any-one that knows anything about the human form knows that babyhood is as unlike childhood as childhood is unlike manhood. If you object to the division of human life into babyhood, childhood, and manhood, infancy, manhood, and old age, we shall not quarrel with you. Few people have noticed how often a normal human being is "born again." All we insist upon is the simple fact that whether in infancy or age he is gripped by the *habit* of life and moves toward what he never has reached. When

THE HABIT OF LIFE

an infant drops the habit of the world he is sick, and even that ripens him for the grave with whatever the grave may mean. Nothing is more pathetic than an infant that tarries while the years go by. In boyhood the writer saw such a sight. It was said that he had water on the brain. He never spoke, never stood, never gave any sign of intelligence save a wan smile. At ten he died an infant, and all who knew him rejoiced. He lived, but had lost the habit and was not *going*. That was a mishap in the complicated path that human life treads. The accident was in the land of the habit.

For the sake of seeing the idea let us follow the division of babyhood, childhood, and manhood. Biological changes not less wonderful than those that occurred when he was in the womb must come to the baby before he can reach boyhood. From boyhood he will reach manhood by the same law of change. The stages of his ongoing may not be as marked as is the transition from the womb to the world, but they will all be presided over by the grip of God, which always

THE FUTURE LIFE

says, "Eyes front." The baby is a man in the same sense that a caterpillar is a butterfly; if he keeps up the *journey*, he will reach the place. It would be near the truth to say that it is the journey that makes him a man.

Any student of biology will tell you that the foregoing is not an exaggerated statement. It is not even a meager statement of the wonderful biological changes that are constantly occurring. Watch the baby as he tries to locate a thing for which he reaches. Even as he extends his hands changes in the relation of the gray matter of his brain take place, so that he is able to coordinate his wish with his action and touch that for which he reaches. This exercise, mental and physical, makes it possible for him later to live and act without waste of time. Man is subject to this eternal law: he spends to-day preparing for to-morrow.

When we turn to the forms of life that are not bodily, in the sense that they are not of the flesh, we stay under the same law. All forms of education are an insistence on the same law being followed. We seek to make

THE HABIT OF LIFE

them certain *kinds* of children, and so we train them. Later we send them to school. Now, everybody knows that a child does not need school to be a child. It is in what a child may become that the claim of the school is located. We know he will need what the schools can give, and so we hold him by the law of what is to be.

When our boy becomes a youth he becomes the most anticipatory creature that we know. He faces forward with the joy of that fact thrown into the relation. The sorrow of it is that we ever lose that joy. My own opinion is that it is a moral sickness that robs us of the joy of living discovered by youth. We *know* no reason why age should not look forward with the same joy that belongs to youth. The fact that he never becomes what he is going to be, never does what he is going to do, we are not now discussing. The illusionary side of life is hardly a subject for investigation. We are simply noting the fact that all normal life is lived under the law of life. The fact that the female of the species knows less about

THE FUTURE LIFE

great transitions is because she comes earlier in life to the real reason for living. The affectional of life is far more real than the possessional. The little girl with her baby doll is in the world to which she goes far more truly than is her brother with his wooden horse and his tin gun. But whether we train our children wisely or unwisely we throw the mantle of the future need across their childish sky and insist on keeping to the habit of life.

Manhood brings no release from this imperative of life. All normal men are living for what is to be. Even our mad pursuit of money is for what it will buy. Men would never toil if the future were secure. Not for myself but for my children is the excuse given for living beyond the strength of nerve and body. When you ground your reason in the past you lower your product. He who lives only to spend is a worse type than he who lives to make. When you take the pressure of the future off human life you make life abnormal and handicap the very act of living.

THE HABIT OF LIFE

The reminiscence of age is but another name for the forward look. They but look through the door of memory to feel the joy of hope. So far as we know, this habit of life is universal in all worlds. It operates in the heart life as in the life of mind and body. This law is as dependable in all places and times as is the law we call gravity in the world we call material. No man has ever stood where this law breaks down. From the meanest to the highest forms of life we know all are in the grip of this simple habit. The New Testament indicates that the angels are under its sway. Gravity is the way God holds things. This law is the way God holds personality, and while he shall remain infinite and we finite there will be some reason for going, and we shall therefore be going. The highest peak attained is but the platform for one's feet, giving time to plume one's wing for flight toward higher things. The statement that the angels "desired to look into" shows they have the same habit. When the cross of Christ was a future thing it had its fascina-

THE FUTURE LIFE

tion for the highest moral creatures. Its glory but opens vistas of other wonderful things to be.

When we can follow life no further we say, "He is dead." Yes, the egg dies that the pupa may be; the pupa gives up its form in order that the caterpillar may come into being. This in turn dies in the cocoon, which is not because the butterfly has come. You cannot prove that any life stops. You cannot be true to the constitution of things and believe that life changes its habit because we can no longer watch it. When we say anything dies we simply mean that we can follow no further with the faculties that limit our vision. We have "magnified" what we could not see and found the same law operating in the world below us, a world in which the forms of life are so infinitesimal that we can see them only when we make them many times bigger than they are. In this world we have found the habit of life to be the same as in the world where we watch, with natural eye, the same law holding all we see. In the world of our own experience we are face to

THE HABIT OF LIFE

face with the same eternal rule and we are perfectly Christian when we trust this law in the forever that is to be. "In my Father's house are many mansions." "If you were at the end of your journey, I would have informed you," it might be added. There is no end. Life's *process* is as changeless as the Deity. Our faith in immortality rests not on accidents but upon *law*—God's law. This law is stamped on every blade of grass that waves in the breeze, on every flower that fills with fragrance the air. Whether life crawls, walks, or flies, the same stamp is on every fiber that goes to the making of its form. Whether the form be so small that we cannot see it, or so large that its very bulk frightens us, makes no difference to the rule of life; all alike moves with eternal fidelity toward the future it has never known. This habit is life's great universal.

CHAPTER VI

THE LEAPS OF LIFE

IT is very easy to overlook the jump of things. When, in 1609, Galileo made his telescope he multiplied the power of the human eye eighty-one times. Our latest telescope lifts human vision three thousand six hundred times. About a hundred years from now men will see the gap between the "wire" and the "wireless." This suggestion in the mechanical world becomes bewildering in the field of life.

If one should come from some far off world, with no knowledge of the ways of life on this planet, and should be given the task of guessing how the singing bird came into life, it is more than likely he would not guess aright. Who, looking at an ostrich, would ever suggest it came out of an egg? The connection between the bird and the egg is

THE LEAPS OF LIFE

not as close as the “wireless” and the “wire.” Did we not know the fact, the wildest imagination would not be equal to its discovery. The distance between the egg and the bird is so great we should never dream the journey could be made in a few days; while the difference in form is such that we should never think to connect them one with the other. When you break an egg it is difficult to believe that had you kept it at a temperature of one hundred and three degrees for twenty-one days, you would have had a chicken. If we did not know the fact, it would be as difficult of belief as that our friends survive the experience we have named death.

No one examining a spermatozoon, if he were not acquainted with the fact, would ever dream that this infinitesimal thing could ever become a human being. The journey taken by the human species is incredible to thought; did we not know the fact, it would never find its place into any creed. The fact far surpasses our ability to fancy. In nine brief months this living thing has lived

THE FUTURE LIFE

through all the centuries we have known. All the paths that life has beaten through the trackless ages are traveled by a babe between conception and birth. The distance between a spermatozoon and a new-born babe has no illustration in the distances of space. Yet to our dull way of thinking we do not count this as a part of human life. We count from this end of that bewildering journey. Before one is born he has visited all the places where the race had lived; he has tarried in each long enough to reap the benefits of all. Then he came into the world with the fruitage of the centuries wrapt in potential possibilities. And yet they called him a babe! If this journey were a stream the source of which we had to find, the stars themselves are near enough to each other to use them as stepping-stones. The stellar spaces are a mere playground beside the leaps and bounds of unborn life. The ion is a very slow thing and fleet-footed light a laggard beside the thing we call the human soul. Your ion moves around itself. The soul moves around nothing. It strides from

THE LEAPS OF LIFE

place to place like unto a god. No wonder is half so wonderful as the *one* who does the wondering.

What should we find could we but trace the path that life had taken before spermatozoon was reached in form? When did we break loose from that vast Spirit that we call "the life"? Is life older than personality?— All of which we know nothing about. Yet it is possible that should we have as long to live as we have already lived we would have eternity before us. Belief in the continuity of personality is not more difficult than faith in that through which we have already come. When our knowledge about what *has* happened to us is so infinitely meager, it seems a silly thing to ask if we shall be to-morrow. It is near the truth to say we know as much about our future as we know about our past.

When we step into the realm of mind the wonder does not cease. It is highly probable that could a new-born babe be given the mind of a mature man, the babe would instantly know as a *man*. We know that he

THE FUTURE LIFE

does know as a man when you give him the tools of a man with which to do his knowing. We know the faculties grow; a new-born babe sees but dimly. When sight comes it is the babe that does the seeing. What is the distance between the mind of a babe and the mind of a man? The child does nothing. The man walks among the stars, analyzes those he has never seen, makes light to sing and sound to shine. The mind of the man is so far removed from the mind of a babe that were they not related in reality, we should never relate them in thought.

When we come to move in the realm we call experience we simply duplicate the wonder. We do not get away from the ways of life because we move from place to place. Fifty years ago a woman said to a little boy, "God always sees you." The little fellow did not propose to have God spying on him undiscovered. He started to hunt the Almighty and played hide and seek with God. He was sure that if he moved quick enough he would find God peeping over

THE LEAPS OF LIFE

some cloud in the sky, and so he would dart around the corners of the house to look in every direction.

Then a great sorrow came into the home. All the family, save the mother, were sick. The baby died; the father was unconscious. One day, with clouded face and breaking heart, the mother went into her room to pray. Near to the door of that room the boy lay on his cot and listened to his mother's prayer. He listened for some voice that would answer the questions that now and again his mother asked; but he heard no voice save his mother's. When she came to his side he asked, "Who were you talking to?" His mother's face was beaming and softly she was singing:

"In darkest shades, if Thou appear,
My dawning is begun;
Thou art my soul's bright morning star,
And thou my rising sun.

"The opening heavens around me shine
With beams of sacred bliss,
If Jesus shows his mercy mine,
And whispers I am his.

THE FUTURE LIFE

“Fearless of hell and ghastly death,
I'd break through every foe;
The wings of love and arms of faith
Would bear me conqueror through.”

Every one she loved was on the verge of the grave.

The boy persisted: “Mother, who were you talking to?”

She answered, “God, my dear.”

Now the boy had another reason for finding God. He wanted to meet God, that he might say, “Thank you, for taking the gloom off my mother's face; thank you for filling her heart with joy and her mouth with song.”

That boy found God; in a Methodist meeting house, in a revival of religion. Since his mother said, “God, my dear,” the earth has made but fifty trips around the sun and, in so doing, has traveled twenty-seven thousand million miles. If you are to measure, in terms of distance, the experiences of life, that boy has traveled more than all those miles for every mile the earth has moved in those fifty years. He now sees God without

THE LEAPS OF LIFE

looking around the corner of the house, finds him without going into another room. He sees him in the growing flower, hears him in the song of the bird, the questioning of a child, and the message of the Christ. He has found God in such fashion that should you locate him so far out in space that the farthest fixed star should be the first thing his fleeting feet might touch, he would see God. Should you bury him beneath all the dead the ages have known, he would still believe in the endless life. If you should shut him in the unopening womb of endless night, he would still see God in the face of Jesus Christ. Neither life nor death, things that are nor things that are to be, can come between him and the love of God in Christ Jesus his Lord. This is the experience of his mind, and it carries with it the affection of his being. Not because he has sat with a "medium"; not because he has seen some automatic writing or worshiped with a ouija board—not for one or all of these, but because he has come to see that Jesus is trustworthy, that his way of thinking is the action

THE FUTURE LIFE

of a rational mind and the measure of the same. The laws of God can be depended on, whether you can watch them or not. Faith in Christ is rational, therefore fruitful, and he "has peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." He has come to see that if you live at all, you live by faith.

If we should imagine anything happening to our departed that is as wonderful as what we know has happened to us, they would have a bigger life than we can fancy. The gulf between here and there, the gulf that wraps us in the deepest ignorance as to what has become of those who are "gone on before" needs be no bigger than the gulf between where we are and where we were. We have done enough coming to have faith in the *going* of life. Whatever would kill faith would spoil the very reason for going. Faith must always be.

What we know to be matters of our own living we may see in all the world about us. Life everywhere moves in a way that baffles the mind. Living is one thing, thinking quite another. All the mechanical wonders

THE LEAPS OF LIFE

of the world do not equal the wonder of a child awaking with a new thought in its mind and a great question on its lips. From crawling to flight, from egg to song, from babe to man—this is the way of life. Because it is it always will be. Thinking is but a very small part of living; we are not yet thinking all we have lived; how then shall we expect to bring the living that is to be into the thinking that now is? The whole attempt to bridge the here with “yonder” is contrary to the ways of life. Life is not only larger than we can think it when we do not know, but it is larger than we think it even when we see it. The results of one year of living we have not yet put into terms of human thinking, and yet we reach toward the life to be, the other leap life has taken, and expect to bring it back to where we are. It is impossible. We must learn to take the ways of life as the laws of God and not expect him to change those laws in one small place because, forsooth, we have come to question the reliability of his ways of doing things.

THE FUTURE LIFE

Let it be said we have no objections to anyone attempting it. It is only when they build their faith on their attempt that we object. We hold that rational inquiry finds abundant ground for faith; that to sit at the feet of Jesus in the spirit of a child will result in rational faith. We object to anybody's attempt to move the superstructure of Christian faith from the life and teachings of Jesus to the land of mediums, ouija boards, automatic writings, or electrical apparatus.

CHAPTER VII

MEDIUMS

Now and again the question of communicating with the departed through mediums comes to the public attention. The question might be discussed from many standpoints. We are not concerned with the honesty of the medium; the fact is that usually a medium's message is childish. We here concern ourselves with the question of the possibility of mediums of any kind bringing an experience from one realm to another.

First, let us say that to Christian faith our departed do not die. To a careful reader of the New Testament the notion that they do not depart very far is likely to take possession of the mind. Christ taught that he would continue his activity in the other world for those for whom he had been active here. Many will bear witness that for all purposes of steadyng and strengthening, in times of

THE FUTURE LIFE

need, our departed loved ones are more potent than when they were with us in the flesh. If it is matter of memory only, it is rather strange that that memory is more potent than the actual presence in the flesh. It is a pure assumption that death puts us out of the life of our departed; in fact, Jesus teaches the very opposite, so far as he is concerned. It would seem a natural thing that Christians would be engaged in the same tasks as their Lord. That death comes between them and us is only one side of the experience—this side. That death comes between us and them we have no way of knowing and no reason to believe. Our knowledge of death is entirely dependent on the impression it makes on those who do not do the dying. In experience we have no basis at all for belief as to what death does to those who die.

Let it be distinctly understood that all attempts to “prove” our departed live arise from doubt. The attempt to bring the life beyond from the realm that necessarily belongs to faith to the land of our human know-

MEDIUMS

ing goes against all the facts of nature and nature's limitations. It is an attempt at a contradiction.

Let us now note a very simple fact of life. The great gulfs of life are experiences. Life builds the barriers with which experience deals, or experience digs the gulfs with which life has to do. Living comes between folks in the same way that death does; it makes it impossible to tell to him who has not lived what living has brought to him who has lived. All the great experiences of life are impassable save in one direction: you must go to them; they cannot be brought to you. This is one of the fundamental limitations. You will find it in every realm.

Take, for illustration, the flower. It needs but little imagination to see that the life of the flower lifts its form from one stage to another, and so far from its kind in the stage below that there is no way of taking back the experience to which the flower has come. Take the lily, fresh and fragrant in its wondrous form—by what means will it communicate to the bulb beside it any idea

THE FUTURE LIFE

of its own attainment? Take the little crawling thing, all legs and body; put beside it the butterfly, which is but a few months ahead of the thing that creeps—how will the thing that flies talk to the thing that creeps? There is no way to take the life of the flyer back to the creeper. It is never done.

Take the eaglet; it has just found the use of its wings. It has not been in the larger world long enough to get away from the joy of it. Now let him alight beside a nest where eggs are in the process of incubation. It should be a simple thing for the eaglet to go back for a few brief weeks in the journey of life and tell to one of its kind what it is likely to know for itself in a few days. Anyone can see that this is impossible—impossible in the very nature of things. It cannot be otherwise without changing all the ways of God.

Come into a world where we are, in thought, more familiar. The student of biology will tell you that there is little difference between a babe unborn and one a few hours old. Suppose that twins are coming into the

MEDIUMS

world. The one to be last born makes demand that the first born shall send back some message that shall assure him that the departed has not ceased to be. We know that nature has made no provision for any such demand being granted. Also we know that there is no way by which the difference those few hours have made can be taken back to the unborn. It is perfectly safe to state that no such arrangement will ever be made. There are no indications of any revolutionary arrangements that will change the habit of the centuries and take back to the unborn the experience of the one that has been born. The unborn will have to wait. That is the only thing God will consent to; at least it is the only arrangement he has made. The unborn may not like it any better than we do; but, what is he going to do about it? It *is* so. It always has been so, and for that reason we may believe it always will be so. Let us recognize the simple fact that it is the experiences of life that come between us. We have become so familiar with the impossibility of crossing these gulfs that we take it

THE FUTURE LIFE

for granted they were not made to be bridged, but simply crossed in one direction.

Take two brothers, for example, one seven and the other seventeen. Ten years should not make such an impossible world between brothers. This simple fact comes between them; one has passed the years of puberty. The other has not yet crossed that crisis. They are brothers. They eat at the same table, speak the same language, use the same dictionary for getting out their lessons in the same school. Yet the lad seventeen is separated from his brother of seven in such a way that all the language known to speech cannot make it possible for him to tell his brother of seven the meaning of puberty. The surge of life at seventeen is utterly unknowable to seven. A single biological change separates brothers in such way that even the medium of the same speech makes no connection between them on the experience that differentiates them. If when face to face a simple fact so separates that one cannot take his experience back to his brother, why should we expect the dead to tell us anything? In

MEDIUMS

the one case the older has gone beyond the younger. In the other case the departed have gone out of the sight of the living. It is, however, an experience of life that has separated us.

Now, let your older boy fall in love and then try to tell his seven-year-old brother what it means. We all know it can't be done. I knew a son who spent much time telling his father he wished the father could know how much he loved his girl. When the father said, "Well, I fell in love with your mother," the son replied, "O, dad, you never loved mother like I love Lucy." What a discovery for a young man to make! Pity the man who has never made it, but tell it to him you cannot. One simple experience in the land of affection and men are separated by a boundless sea. There is but one way to know what it means to love and that is to do the loving. The medium of words only muddles the mind. There are no mediums that can bring together those who are separated in the land of affection.

Now, go from one experience to the other

THE FUTURE LIFE

in the same realm. I have a simple experiment I would like the folk to make who have lost their mental poise on the subject of mediums. When you have tried out this test—and failed—sit down and ponder its significance. Go to your son, who has never known in experience the feeling of being a father, and tell him what it means to take in your arms a helpless little thing and call it “my boy.” Let the mothers try the same thing with their daughters. To give strength to your enterprise sit down together and make a list of the words you will use. Consult the Century Dictionary, the Standard Dictionary, or any other, or take all of them, for that matter, and make the list comprehensive. To be sure that you make no mistake ask your son or daughter if they know what the words mean. Having been to school, they will smile at you and say, “Sure”—sometimes they learn at school what the school is supposed to unteach—“This comes from the Greek, this from the Latin.” They will be correct about the derivation; you will take that for granted. Now you have your

MEDIUMS

words—a collection of “mediums.” Arrange them in companies called sentences and let these “mediums” tell what you have experienced to those who have never experienced the same thing. You may take all the dictionaries of all the world and all the languages of all the ages, and for good measure we will throw in all the ouija boards that were ever made; then I challenge any father or mother to tell to son or daughter, who has never *felt* fatherhood or motherhood, what it means. You can make the sounds we call words, load them with the feeling we call inflection, but you cannot take back the life the other has not *felt*.

When you go from the realm of human affection to that realm where the life of the soul is concerned you are in the same land of limitation. Who has ever told what it means to repent? Psalms and phrases have become immortal because they come nearer, but not one experience of the souls has ever been wrapped in human speech. They are indicated but not described. Good men of all the ages have wrestled with the task of bring-

THE FUTURE LIFE

ing the experiences of the soul into the common speech of human life. It has not yet been done. In the nature of things it never will be accomplished.

When you study this universal limitation you find more in it than the merely subjective life. The incident related by Sir A. Conan Doyle of the young man muddled with drink, taken by a medium and leaving a few hours later reformed because he was under the impression he had conversed with his mother, through the medium, is study in the subjective life of *the young man*. Through the medium his mother has told him things that the medium did not know. But all he had been told was known by himself. It is more than suggestive that we are never told simple things we do not know. It would be a simple thing for some medium to learn the presence of a star in some place in the heavens we have not yet seen. But the departed do not bring this kind of messages. We get all complicated and tangled up in circumstantial worlds, but we remain in the land of our own limitations.

MEDIUMS

Lazarus leaves us not a word about the other world; not because it would not be interesting but because, in the nature of things, it could not be done. We have no epistle of the "Widow's Son" that tells us how he felt when they were carrying his body to the grave and the Master met the bier. The girl to whom Christ said, "Little daughter, arise," comes back to begin eating; the Master commanded that they give her something to eat. She returned, but brought not with her any word of where she had been. All the appearances of Jesus after his resurrection come inside the limitations of life.

Now, to reason that "they" do not know because they cannot tell us is to be blind to the very fact of our limitations. All that a flying bird can tell an egg must come within the limitations of the life of the *egg*. You never reason that the teacher did not know because your child did not learn. All the ways of life indicate that we cannot know while in the body the life of the spirit that has dropped the mortal and "put on immortality."

THE FUTURE LIFE

When some modern story writer comes to reform the church, the man who lets the wish be father to the thought and tells us it is time for the church to go forward and bridge the gulf between the church militant and the church triumphant, we simply tell him we wished that ourselves before he mentioned it, only we went a little further than he has gone and found out why it cannot be. Life's limitations are a part of living, and in no place where we can see both sides of life is it possible to take the life to which the living goes to the one who has not gone. Hang our faith on mediums? Not yet! Wherever we have studied the medium we have found it unable to tell the story that we should wish to have told.

We have learned that life is a matter of *going*—going to where you have never been before and then going; going till you “think God’s thoughts after him”; going till you feel God’s emotions with him and still keep going. And when the time comes that you can say you have enjoyed more of the divine face and favor than all the intelligences of

MEDIUMS

the moral world had enjoyed when you began, there will still be experiences to which we may go, that none have known and that none could tell to any who had not known them. This is the way of life. God has not so blundered in his ways up to now that he will need to change them for the then. The whole mediumistic business is an attempt at the impossible. It is an expression of a desire that cannot be granted because you cannot put a crab back into the shell from which it has emerged. Life not only never goes back, but it is never carried back. Study your medium wherever you will and you will find it always fails.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SILENT ANSWER

SUPPOSE in the fall of the year you should catch a blackbird that was raised in the State of New York. Now, also suppose that you could dissect the bird. I do not mean cut its little body to pieces. I mean the bird. A bird is more than body. It is something *inside the body* that does the singing, and beneath feathers and flesh is a great impulse. If your knife were sharp enough and your sight keen enough, you would find inside the body a disposition. We call it the migratory instinct. Where, when, or how this instinct was born is not the question. We are after the lessons on the dependability of law. We have millions of birds that migrate every year. It would be a very foolish bird that argued, "There can be no Southland because I have never seen it." When we study birds we see that the *desire* is the answer. The scientist will tell you that if you find an in-

THE SILENT ANSWER

stinct for the Southland, the Southland must be. You can have no native instinct for which there is no answer. What we wish now to notice is that the answer is a silent one. It has no words; it makes no argument; it simply *is*.

What is true of bird is true of fish. Salmon find the cold and crystal waters though they have to go thousands of miles to do so. In the fall of the year I have watched, day after day, the small fish circumnavigating the bays on the north side of Long Island, and in an endless procession going South. The procession reached all the miles, perhaps ten or fifteen, around the bay and along the south side of Long Island Sound. Though the deep water at the mouth of the bay is not more than a mile wide, the fish keep near the shore before taking the chance of crossing. The *call south* was *in them* and the call was the silent answer.

In the animal world the same is true. Seal would cross the sea led or unled by their elders. If one should give all the illustrations that we have on this subject, he would

THE FUTURE LIFE

have to write a whole natural history. We simply notice two things:

First. The instinct is utterly dependable. Fish, bird, and beast trust it. It is only when we come to man that it cannot be trusted! That is the way our friends would have us reason who want a "message" from the other country.

Second. Silence is the only answer bird, fish, or beast get. This silence is well worth study. The reaches of geography are not the only gulfs over which appalling silence hangs.

Try and hold a conversation with a chick before it has peeped. Just persuade the little thing that it is a waste of effort to try and break through the shell. The chick would have all the "arguments" that are used against our belief in immortality. It would surely be true "that no one has ever come back to tell us of another world." As far as the chick can see, the inside of the shell is the universe. We sometimes have wondered whether some little thing did not come to believe that. We have seen full-grown chicks

THE SILENT ANSWER

that were dead in the shell. "Too hard a shell" is the reason generally given. May it not be true that the effort was too feeble? Who will say that the cause, for a full-grown chick's failure to break through the shell is not in the chick's mentality? It is certain that the chick that does not break through dies for that reason. The suicide of the chick does not kill the great outside. Death does not end all because some twisted mind has the idea; nor does life end because we are afraid it will.

What here we notice is that the chick moves by its own internal impulse. The great outside does not come to the chick. The *only* thing the chick has as ground of action is its own impulse; it is growing and must have larger place and so it breaks through into another world of living. There is an outside that answers to the impulse to get there.

"No news is good news" we readily understand when we are waiting to hear from an absentee. It has its bearing on the subject of the other life. Jesus used it in his fare-

THE FUTURE LIFE

well address to his friends: "If it were not so, I would have told you." You have here the plainest kind of a stating that silence is an affirmation. Were there no other mansions in the Father's house, he would have told us.

It is well to remember that the resurrection of Jesus was not the ground of his belief in the future life. He believed in it before it happened. His faith was not conditioned on the fact that he had seen "the first fruits of them that slept." Whatever may have been the foundation of his faith in the continuity of personality, it is certain that he did not break the law of silence. He told us nothing about it, save that it was and that he would still be engaged in his own redeeming work; that he would come for them and they should come to him. Jesus believed in more than immortality—he believed in the perpetuity of personality; all of which is in the land of faith. He did not build on "mediums, automatic writing, ouija boards, or electrical apparatus." His final appeal was to the laws of the universe about him and his own consciousness.

THE SILENT ANSWER

In all places where life is on its way to larger living, a greater future, a solemn silence is maintained. The buried bulb gets no message from some full-grown flower about the sunlight and the larger life; save the message of silence. The babe in the womb gets no message about the great world to which he is on his way. It is highly probable that the womb is as silent as the moon. If the unborn ask questions, the only answer they receive is silence. Even in the world of speech silence is maintained. None of the gulfs that life builds in experience between one creature and another are really crossed backward. The boy may ask a thousand times, "What is it to be a man?" The way children play "grown-up" shows the answer never comes. They may mimic, but they cannot know. Silence is the atmosphere in which they live. The same reasons we could give for asking that the silence of the tomb be broken could be given by every living thing that moves toward a larger future.

The ways of life are the laws of God. The universal silence that surrounds the life that

THE FUTURE LIFE

is with regard to the life that is to be, is God's declaration that you will have to put up with it. The questionings of doubt about the future life are declarations of dissatisfaction with the ways of God.

Where we can see both sides of this silence we see the cause therefor. To get a wireless you have to have a receiver. The messages are going all the time. The reason you do not get them is because you have no way of "picking them up." The vibrations are in the air, but, you have nothing with which to read them. The absence of faculty is the cause of ignorance. It is probably true that even the Almighty does not know anything that he is not willing you should know; but how are you going to know it? You have to have a knower as well as a fact before you can have knowledge. Facts are facts. Knowledge is the number of facts we have come to know. It is a pure gratuity to assume that our departed could tell us anything. Our want of a "receiver" handicaps them. Many a mother wants to tell what her daughter later will find out; many a

THE SILENT ANSWER

daughter wants to know, and both have to wait. This is probably the reason for the silence of the centuries on "What kind of a world have our departed gone to?"

That there is silence as to the *fact* of the future life we utterly deny. All life *has* moved from other forms. All life *is* moving to forms to be. All life has to trust the law by which it moves. Fish never start for waters that do not flow. Birds never migrate to places that cannot be found. They have no instinct calling them to what is not. Babies have always found a larger world than that in which the unborn dwell. Experience always enlarges as the future becomes now. Man is not yet a moral dodo, finding all his needs fulfilled in the little now in which he lives. He lives with his face to the future and lives his largest when he lives by faith. The foundations for faith strongly indicate that a larger faith will come to man; for now the foundations are far larger than the structure. The reasons for believing in the future life are far larger than the belief.

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
REFERENCE DEPARTMENT

**This book is under no circumstances to be
taken from the Building**

JUL 21 1921	AUG	AUG 1 1921
JUL 21 1921	AUG 3 1921	AUG 1 1921
JUL 21 1921	AUG 4 1921	AUG 1 1921
JUL 21 1921	AUG 5 1921	AUG 1 1921
JUL 21 1921	AUG 6 1921	AUG 1 1921
JUL 21 1921	AUG 7 1921	AUG 1 1921
JUL 21 1921	AUG 8 1921	AUG 1 1921
JUL 21 1921	AUG 9 1921	AUG 1 1921
JUL 21 1921	AUG 10 1921	AUG 1 1921
JUL 21 1921	AUG 11 1921	AUG 1 1921
JUL 21 1921	AUG 12 1921	AUG 1 1921
JUL 21 1921	AUG 13 1921	AUG 1 1921
JUL 21 1921	AUG 14 1921	AUG 1 1921
JUL 21 1921	AUG 15 1921	AUG 1 1921
JUL 21 1921	AUG 16 1921	AUG 1 1921

1976

1976

1976

1976

1976

